



Lift them up!

Tennessee Department of Children's Services

“Recognizing Excellence”



**An Employee Recognition and
Appreciation Program**

Guidebook- 2008

“Recognizing Excellence” Overview

The Tennessee Department of Children’s Services (DCS) strives to create a work environment that allows for personal and professional growth, affording each employee a high quality of life. The Department will also respect and promote each staff member’s personal family interests, recognizing that we must have the opportunity for safety and stability in our own lives before we can adequately and appropriately serve others.

Employee recognition allows us to give well-deserved recognition to our employees for a job well done. Quality service for staff or the children and families we serve is achieved more easily when employees feel their efforts are appreciated. The goal of the “Recognizing Excellence” program is to demonstrate genuine recognition and appreciation for the contributions of our employees, thereby reinforcing positive outcomes, achievements, goals and strategies, while strengthening our commitment to children, their families and to our employees.

To be effective in recognizing and appreciating the efforts of Department of Children’s Services (DCS) employees, we must be sincere and timely. Outstanding leaders go out of their way to boost self-esteem among their staff. If people believe in themselves, it is amazing what can be accomplished! When employees feel what they do is important, that they are valued as individuals, and that their efforts are appreciated, they feel a deeper commitment to their work, and demonstrate an increased loyalty to their employer.

The “Recognizing Excellence” Steering Committee has developed an employee driven program to acknowledge employees who excel in the delivery of service to children, their families and to other employees.

This guidebook was developed to provide a reference for the Department of Children’s Services (DCS) Employee Recognition and Appreciation Program “Recognizing Excellence”. These guidelines provide managers, supervisors and employees with a variety of choices for meaningful recognition and appreciation. These tools will be valuable in acknowledging and encouraging desirable performance and behavior of DCS staff.

DCS MISSION

Our mission is to empower families and support community safety and partnerships to help ensure safety, permanency and well-being for children.

DCS VISION

Leading the way for safety and permanency in the lives of children and families by championing excellence in service.

STEERING COMMITTEE AND APPOINTMENTS

Members of the Employee Recognition and Appreciation Steering Committee prepared this Guidebook to assist the Departmental Agencies and Programs in “Recognizing Excellence” in their employees.

These Employee Recognition and Appreciation Steering Committee members are chosen by the Regional Administrators, Directors, or Superintendents to serve as chairperson of their respective regional committees and will represent them on the statewide committee. Each member will serve a term of one fiscal year (from July 1 through June 30).

Steering Committee Members for 2008 are listed below:

REPRESENTATIVE

REGION

Sandy Sauceman, Chairperson (Alternate: Vicki Burton)	Central Office
Kim Crabtree	Central Office
Kandi Taylor	Central Office
Nica Carter	Central Office
Tara Burnett	Central Office
Vicki Burton (Alternate: Sandy Sauceman)	Central Office
Anne Hesson (Alternate: Melanie Kinslow)	Davidson
Rose Seivers (Alternate: Joy Sturgill)	East
Barbara Wyatt (Alternate: Debby Bunn)	Hamilton
John McDonald	Knox
Shatina Marshall	Mid-Cumberland
Ernie Murray (Alternate: Lagen Johnson)	Northeast
Allison Downs (Alternate: Beverly Pierpoint)	Northwest
Lethelea Jackson (Alternate: Teresa Grice)	Shelby
Chris Hunt	Smoky Mountain
Brenda Lane	South Central
Pat Vasterling (Alternate: Erica Crawford)	Southeast
Tina Brint (Alternate: Sharon Powers)	Southwest
Pam Gannon (Alternate: Kelly Sullivan)	Upper Cumberland

REGIONAL COMMITTEES / MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY

Each region will follow the guidelines and use the resources supplied in this guidebook or by the steering committee. Each region is responsible for formulating an employee recognition committee. The chairperson from the region committee will serve on the Steering Committee. This regional committee will consist of a proportionate number of diverse staff, representing different job functions and will serve for a period of one year (from June 1 to July 30). This will allow a sufficient overlap to allow the in-coming committee a smooth transition. A regional committee meeting is to be held at a minimum on a quarterly basis. The committee will also be responsible for determining the types and frequency of "Other Awards" to be given in their regions and will ensure that there are at least two functions annually to reward and recognize employees.

PURPOSE

The Department of Children's Services Employee Recognition and Appreciation Program is designed to encourage employees to strive to give their best either individually or through team efforts. The program is intended to recognize achievements or accomplishments that demonstrate the core values of safety, well-being and permanency in the Path to Excellence model.

GOALS

The goals of the Department of Children's Services Employee Recognition and Appreciation Program are:

- To recognize and promote positive behaviors that support individual, work group, unit, team, department, school and/or institutional mission and business goals and objectives;
- To provide timely recognition to employees;
- To provide various mechanisms to facilitate recognition based on the significance of the employee's contribution;
- To provide individual and/or team recognition and rewards;
- To provide for manager and employee initiated recognition and rewards;
- To improve employee productivity, quality of work and promote a positive work environment; and
- To improve internal and external customer service.

ELIGIBILITY

This program is open to all Department of Children's Services (DCS) employees who have been employed with the department at least six (6) months and who are considered as being "in good standing."

BUDGET FOR THE PROGRAM EVENTS

The budget for the statewide Employee Recognition and Award program for the Department of Children's Services is \$13,000 a year. Each region will receive an allotment of funds. For the fiscal year 2008-2009, the 12 regions will each receive a budgeted amount of \$900 for the fiscal year to be spent toward food and entertainment for their Employee Recognition and Award Ceremonies. The Steering Committee will ensure that there is an allowance of the overall budget allocated in order to sponsor a State Level Awards Ceremony annually.

BUDGET FOR PROGRAM AWARDS

The budget for the statewide Employee Recognition and Award Program will be determined on a year-to-year basis. Awards will be procured and ordered by Central Office Human Resources and shipped to designated regional steering committee members. Use of the contract with the State's Division of Purchases and Supply is mandatory; however, the contract includes multiple vendors and suppliers who provide a wide range of items economically.

AWARD NOMINATION FORM

All Department of Children's Services employees who have been employed at least six (6) months with the department and who are in good standing are eligible. Desirable qualities of the nominee should include a positive attitude, perseverance, being a team player, embracing the nine (9) guiding principles of Department of Children's Services and going above and beyond.

To nominate an employee, fill out the Employee Nomination Form. After you complete your recommendation, have your Supervisor sign the Employee Nomination Form and submit it to the Chairman of your region for the Employee Recognition and Appreciation Program. The employee nominations will be reviewed for awards at a regional level. At the end of the year, each regional committee will submit one employee from the employee nominations to the Steering Committee for Employee of the Year.

TYPES OF EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AND APPRECIATION

To ensure fair and consistent application within the Department, a core set of rewards and recognition for the regional programs are suggested as follows: (Additional recognition activities may be added if needed.)

☐ Planned Employee Recognition

This approach is characterized by selecting a Team Player/ Employee of the Quarter based on the allocation of awards for the region/facility. The planned recognition will take place in the region *at least bi-annually*. These would be considered the most structured award in the nomination and selection process and would warrant the bigger valued awards. This award would be:

☐ Team Player or Employee of the Month/Quarter

This award is used to recognize the top performers in each region. The employees selected in the regional quarterly process will be eligible for consideration in the Department of Children's Services (DCS) statewide award for the "Department of Children's Services (DCS) Employee of the Year" to be recognized at the annual DCS "Recognizing Excellence" Awards Ceremony to be held in August of each year.

☐ Other categories:

The regions/facilities will be allowed to designate pre-arranged, more frequently scheduled ways of acknowledging contributions and accomplishments of an individual, team or section within their region.

This approach provides employee recognition and appreciation at any time for demonstrating behaviors that reflect the core values of the Path to Excellence model, values and objectives of the organization. This recognition can come from co-workers, team leaders, team coordinators, and other regional/facility staff or from community partners. This type of award will be recognized with lesser value awards allocated to the regions and/or a certificate.

Examples of this type of award could be (but are not limited to):

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|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ❖ Cheers for Peers | ❖ Outstanding Achievement Award |
| ❖ Everyday Hero Award | ❖ Make a Difference Award |
| ❖ Helping Hand Award | |
| ❖ Shining Star Award | |
| ❖ Essential Piece Award | |
| ❖ Above and Beyond | |
| ❖ Bright Idea | |
| ❖ "Can Do" Award | |

ANNUAL “RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE” STATEWIDE AWARDS:

This is the highest level of award given to an employee from each region/facility within the Department of Children’s Services. This level will recognize individuals for extraordinary achievement and/or extraordinary contribution requiring maximum effort that significantly impacted customer service and/or productivity. Individuals will be nominated for the statewide awards from the region/facility quarterly award winners and submitted to Central Office CORE Leadership and/or designee for the State level, and will be recognized as “Department of Children’s Services (DCS) Employee of the Year”. These individuals will be recognized each August at the statewide awards ceremony with presentations by the Department of Children’s Services (DCS) Commissioner.

POLICY INTERPRETATION

The Executive Director of Human Resources and/or designee will be responsible for official interpretation of this program and policies that may affect this program. General questions regarding functions and activities should be directed to the regional designee.